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ABSTRACT

This report of qualitative findings, gathered from four sources, presents guidelines to promote implementation of whole language. The report uses Donald Ely's (1990) conditions for change as a framework. These conditions are: dissatisfaction with the status quo, the existence of knowledge and skills, availability of time and resources, participation, commitment, leadership, and presence of rewards and incentives. After a brief description of whole language, the report presents individual case information on two reading specialists, a school teacher, and a reading coordinator who were involved in the process of changing to whole language. Based on analysis of the cases, it appeared that while Ely's conditions were still present, they required a slightly different interpretation and some modification, and the report then lists and discusses 10 conditions specifically for whole language implementation that emerged from the analysis. Twenty references and a list of 16 interview questions are attached. (Author/RS)

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WHOLE LANGUAGE: WHAT IS IT?

Debra Lee Newton

ABSTRACT

The report of qualitative findings, gathered from four sources: two reading specialists, a school teacher, and a reading coordinator, present guidelines to promote implementation of Whole Language. Ely's (1990) conditions for educational change are used as a framework for the report. These conditions are: dissatisfaction with the status quo, the existence of knowledge and skills, availability of time and resources, participation, commitment, leadership, amd presence of rewards and incentives. Each source was asked a set of open ended questions pertaining to the change process. The objective of the study is to determine if Ely's conditions for implementation of educational technology innovations hold for the 'change' to Whole Language as determined by interviewing the four sources. The report contains a brief description of Whole Language, individual case information, and a summary of conclusions regarding conditions for implementation of Whole Language.

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WHOLE LANGUAGE: WHAT IS IT?

Debra Lee Newton

Whole Language is being discussed in many circles today, but what is it? There is no 'Webster's Dictionary' definition for the term often making people uncomfortable. Whole Language has been referred to as a method, an approach, and a style, but it is actually a philosophy based on the development of children's reading and writing skills. When discussing Whole Language people tend to list activities and practices in order to clarify what Whole Language encompasses. Whole Language carries many myths with it and a person must understand the reason for those myths and why they exist. An excellent article on this issue is Myths of Whole Language by Judith Newman (1990). For this paper a brief discussion of Whole Language is given, if further clarification is needed reference can be made to the bibliography.

In the 19th century, education was based on the industrial efficiency model. This model had been developed for factory workers and emphasized drill and practice in order to cover material in a certain allotted time. Education has long been based on this model. Basal readers emphasize learning component parts to develop language skills, use drill and practice, and have the teacher playing the role of 'information giver.' Whole Language is what is says,'Whole', based on the philosophy that

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children learn to read and write naturally by listening, watching, speaking and writing. An immersion of the child into reading and writing as a whole, through children's literature, poetry, daily writing assignments, and reading enables the child to achieve the skills required by a basal reader. A Whole Language environment helps the child gain a positive attitude towards reading and writing which grows into a love of reading and writing, researched in detail by Brand, (1991). Whole Language articles often examine the effects on the child and overlook the effects on the teachers. The environment created in a Whole Language classroom is exciting, vibrant, and invigorating for the student and the teacher. A teacher that becomes excited by the teaching environment can only instill this excitement in students. Thus, the change to Whole Language, although a difficult process, has its rewards for teacher and student.

THE SOURCES

Cindy is a reading specialist at Mchenry Elementary School. The school is a magnet school in a mid-size city and has implemented special reading and writing programs prior to Whole Language. At this point, the school is at a pilot stage.

Kathy is a reading specialist at Campbell Elementary School. Neither the school nor the system is recognized as Whole Language and they have not reached the pilot stage yet, but teachers have

been implementing the approach themselves. They hope to advance to a pilot stage soon and then be recognized as a Whole Language system.

Sandra of the Sweeney Elementary School is a Pre-First teacher and is one of the few teachers using Whole Language in her system. Neither the school nor the system is recognized as Whole Language.

Linda is the reading coordinator of the Richland school system. This school system has been recognized as a Whole Language system after a change process that took only five years.

KATHY-READING SPECIALIST AT CAMPBELL

Kathy became aware of the Whole Language philosophy through her schooling in the 50's. Although her education was not named as Whole Language, it was very similar. With the introduction of the Whole Language philosophy and the push received by a nearby school district that had become Whole Language, she talked to her resource leader and decided to create a questionnaire to see how many teachers would be interested. Her reservations involved the fact that "teachers would feel uncomfortable and that they would misunderstand Whole Language" which was true, but Kathy was

persistent and provided teachers with information, modeled Whole Language activities, and conferenced with them when needed.

The Implementation Process: Making the Change

Kathy continued to interest more people in the program by running workshops and compiling special readings from professional journals that she printed in booklet form for the teachers. They also had professional lecturers and consultants come to the school to demonstrate that "there is help out there, if someone wants to try it. I am out there ready to help, there is a support group with in the system."

The teachers accepted Whole Language and wanted to adopt and implement it fully, but there was a minor constraint, one of the principals in the district was very opposed to the idea and wanted to remain using the basals and the standardized testing. Teachers in his school administer the standardized tests, but they are using Whole Language activities in their classrooms, despite his opposition.

This situation did not stop the teachers from implementing Whole Language ideas, but it has made them more cautious. The school is trying to pilot Whole Language, but there are also budget and state funding constraints that will be a determining factor as to whether they will pilot or not. In the meantime, the school is an 'integrated' school, which is similar to Whole

Language. " Kathy noted that the assistant superintendent said 'you can use other material in your room, but you must use the tests from the basals that we say are our program.'"

Kathy has used her schooling and knowledge to help the school implement Whole Language ideas. She has used many books as consultants, but wishes there was someone that could be a consultant to them, a role which she has inadvertantly taken. "I nagged everyone to death, I don't know if I am the leader, but I am definitely the chief nagger."

Changes that occurred in the school included an instillment of enjoyment for reading and writing in the children. " There is always somebody walking around with a book in their hand." A claim came from the librarian that she found it very difficult to keep books on the shelves, and the was also a change in the teachers, as they were taking more risks. Kathy said the school consisted of "total integration and basal with some integration... basically teachers are doing what they feel comfortable with... I don't believe every teacher can be a teacher of Whole Language."

Kathy is the reading specialist for Campbell and has taken on the role of the school consultant. She models and conferences with teachers, and gives them one-to-one support if needed. The teachers' participation in the program is significant, they share ideas with one another and their incentives to continue the program include one credit workshops and intrinsic incentives. They stay late and come earlier, and if needed will be there on

weekends.

The support from their principal has been exemplary.

> She has been marvelously supportive, she understands reading, she was an instructional specialist before she became a principal. She is behind it a 100%... She, on her own, bought the entire faculty a little book on inventive spelling. She goes to conferences and spends hundreds and hundreds of dollars on books and has them in her office for anyone. She goes in the classrooms, reads to the children, she is really wonderful. She has really stuck her neck out!

To implement Whole Language, according to Kathy, one must have knowledge of reading, and make sure all the teachers are knowledgeable. Teachers must "know content and feel secure enough to take a risk." Kathy feels that ensuring implementation of Whole language is a given, because a Whole Language core group exists in every school and they will always rise to the top to carry out the philosophy.

SANDRA- PRE-FIRST TEACHER

Sandra became aware of Whole Language through workshops that she had been attending in Syracuse. The ideas that were presented interested her enough to follow up with readings from professional journals and any articles that pertained to Whole Language. She spent a year researching the philosophy to determine if it would work for her situation. The fact that she was teaching a transitional grade created a need for something

different than the basal reader. She expressed that the "students had already failed with many of the stories and felt that reading was not fun, they didn't need to fail again. Thus out of necessity I began to look for some other way to teach them the same skills." Whole Language seemed to fill the order for her; it would change their attitude towards reading and writing and would allow them to be successful while gaining the required skills. Sandra discussed the Whole Language philosophy with her curriculum supervisor and principal and gained their approval. Although she was eager to begin, she had some common reservations, "How was I going to be able to cover everything, all the aspects of the curriculum. How was I going to do all of this without a manual here that always told me how!"

The Implementation Process: Making the Change

Sandra began by keeping the Ginn program she had been using and in the afternoons would read a Big Book and do an activity. Then she began doing some Whole Language activities in the morning, until eventually she scheduled one day and did nothing but Whole Language. As she stated " The children grew to love that day of the week best of all." As time passed, and she observed the changes that were occurring in the children's attitudes towards reading and writing she decided to implement Whole Language completely. She discussed this issue with her principal and the superintendent for instruction and was told

"what do you have to lose". The encouragement and support came in the form of resources such as Big Books and materials, and mostly in the form of support for what she was doing. Sandra claimed " I couldn't have done it without the support, without them telling me I could do it. They also weren't looking over my shoulder all the time, they trusted me." Being one of the only teachers in the district implementing Whole Language, the training she received was not through the school, but through workshops and any articles she read. Her bible became a sourcebook for Whole Language, which she followed and used as her consultant. "You have to understand, I had taught for fifteen years prior to this, I knew what skills and knowledge the children had to have, I just had to make sure they were getting them through the literature."

The administration supported her and trusted her enough to let her gain ownership of the process; she stated that " I have ownership of the program because it is a transition grade... I don't have the confines of the curriculum as heavily." The administration did not provide any incentives or rewards to make her change, instead, she initiated the change, thus, the incentives and rewards were intrinsic. "I felt like I wasn't frustrating the children and I was keeping my promise to the parents; the children would not have to read book they had already read."

When asked if she felt she had completely implemented Whole Language she replied, " I'll never reach 100%, I am afraid if I

do I'll sit there complacently on my haunches and say everything is fine, I'll get stagnant."

Sandra said the one thing you have to do when implementing Whole Language is "to go in with the attitude that, this is going to take time and its going to take a lot of effort." But, when successfully implemented, the children are happy and no matter what stage of reading they are in, they feel they are reading.

CINDY-READING SPECIALIST AT MCHENRY

Mchenry is a magnet school and two of the magnet components were writing process and literature; thus Whole Language for them developed out of something they were already implementing. The faculty at Mchenry approached the principal with the idea of implementing Whole Language and subsequently spent a year researching the philosophy and determining if it would fulfill their needs. "What we had been doing didn't work... if it doesn't work it's time to look at what you're doing and say-- it's time to try something different."

The reservations they had did not pertain to the philosophy of Whole Language, but rather on how they were going to implement Whole Language and train the staff. After the year of research they went to the School Board for staff development, and eventually, a Whole Language pilot approval. The staff went above and beyond in-service training; there were summer and even

weekend training sessions to which they all attended, the staff was extremely committed.

The Implementation Process: Making the Change

Once Mchenry received pilot approval, the changes began. Changes at this school were not as drastic as in others because they were a magnet school and had already been implementing approaches similar to Whole Language. Yet, the teachers still needed to use the basal readers as support. Cindy stated that this was "absolutely necessary... They have to be comfortable and go through the process slowly. It's a lot more work to be a Whole Language teacher because you don't have a recipe." One of the unique aspects of this school was that at the time of their pilot program all the teachers wanted to do Whole Language. The few that had not wanted to participate had retired by the time the pilot program started. This seems to have allowed them to implement Whole Language rather quickly and successfully. The teachers all supported each other, and were guided by their principal who was quoted to be "the key" to the success that they were having. "She is visionary and supportive of staff... She deserves a lot of the credit... It couldn't be done without joint cooperation." They also received support from the District Administration in the form of approval, money, and resources. A major support system emerged within the parents, "parents need to understand, they need to be educated, it's a piece of Whole

Language."

Cindy, being the reading specialist in the school, became the consultant for the teachers. "We help people to grow, but it takes time... We don't expect to change people's styles and what they are comfortable with." Teachers are growing developmentally, just as much as the children in the program are growing. A common trend throughout all the teachers participating in the Whole Language implementation, although they may be at different stages, was that they felt someone had given them a license to teach. They no longer felt confined or inhibited by a textbook; teaching became exciting. Thus, incentives for the teachers were intrinsic, Cindy said

> It gave me a chance to be creative in the classroom. I could look at the kids and say, this is what you can do, this is what you need to do, and this is how I am going to help you get there.

Her attitude toward teaching changed, and the children's attitudes toward learning changed. "Children were reading and writing, they were becoming literate, and they were enjoying themselves."

Each teacher is required to do certain components of Whole Language, but they decide how to implement the components. Cindy is available for modeling or conferencing, but a level of trust is set up between the teachers, Cindy and the administration. Teachers should feel comfortable to try something and if they fail feel comfortable with their mistakes and try again. There are no longer any basals in the school, but training and support is given to anyone that requires it. The ongoing training and

support ensures that Whole Language remains implemented. Cindy stated that:

> implementation is a continuing process, right now we are examining the assessment aspect of Whole Language and so far it's taken three years and no conclusions have developed, I don't think you are ever a Whole Language teacher, I think you are constantly becoming a Whole Language teacher, I don't think the process ever stops, it's an ongoing process.

LINDA-READING COORDINATOR FOR RICHLAND

Linda was new to Richland when she began the change process within the school system. The institution was already looking for something different; their children were average and above average students that performed well on the standardized tests given with the basals, but faculty and parents wanted more.

> The basal reader that we had in the district was not appropriate, it wasn't doing what they wanted it to do, they felt that a lot of our children were alliterate, they could read and write, but chose not to.

Linda was familiar with Whole Language and thought it would provide the type of change desired. Whole Language in mind, Linda did a needs assessment of the district to determine what they wanted from the program and if it would fit their needs as a district. The needs assessment verified that Whole Language would be appropriate to implement. Linda then increased faculty awareness and interest in Whole Language by use of faculty meetings, dissemination of articles, conferences, demonstrations, visitations, persuasion, matching up teachers, and using the

stategies she learned in a Diffusion and Implementation course

> This was very planned, everything I did with every teacher was planned right down, very minutely, because I knew that all the teachers had to go through the steps.

The steps were: Awareness, Interest, and Adoption, as stated in Rogers (1983).

The Implementation Process: Making the Change

The diffusion process was successful and adoption occurred. The board approved a pilot program in the district that would be centered on a few classrooms. They hired an outside evaluator, developed a Richland writing test, and brought in a person from Educational Testing Services to train them as to how to construct their own tests. They still used standardized tests in the beginning so they could be sure they were maintaining their previous scores. The pilot was successful, and it was determined that half of the faculty would implement Whole Language in the second year.

> I wanted it to be something special for the teachers... We setup a two week training session in the summer and the teachers had to apply to be accepted for training in the summer. I wanted a model of Whole Language at every grade level... I knew that if the innovation was going to spread they needed to have it right close to them, where they could see it and touch it and go in there and talk to those people that were doing it. So that's why the second year 50% of the staff at every grade level were in Whole Language.

Although the implementation process seems to have gone rather quickly, and in retrospect it did, the faculty was not required to

> throw everything out in mass... They kept a set of basals... some teachers used the basals occasionally even though they were teaching Whole Language, just because they needed that crutch and there is nothing wrong with that.

One of the reasons the implementation was so fluid was because of the parents' participation. Parents were educated on the program and it's workings. They were asked to participate and became involved, especially in the pilot classrooms.

> Parents were the real clinchers in terms of the swiftness. Parents knew half of the students would be in Whole Language, and half in basal. Then the letters came in and pressure was put on the board to implement Whole Language completely."

Parents wanted their children to be in Whole Language classrooms, and if they weren't, the board heard about it. Richland is now in it's fifth year of Whole Language and is a Whole Language district. They continue to train their faculty and staff "anytime there is a need, we have someone come in and discuss that matter." The follow-up and support that is provided is ongoing and was part of their structured plan from the very beginning. "I knew that was what would make or break our particular program."

Although Linda was the change agent in this situation, she claims,

> The teachers were pushing me faster than I thought we should go... I was not the instigator that made it go

> that quickly, it was really the teachers and the parents... They wanted to have it for their children.

Program introduction and planning was done by Linda, but movement and change was created by the teachers and the parents, who also influenced the board and administrators.

ANALYSIS OF CASES

In examining each of the cases, I find that Ely's (1990) conditions for Implementation of Educational Technology Innovations are present, but require a slightly different interpretation and some modification. Whole Language, being a philosophy, would naturally be implemented differently than a technologly innovation. By analyzing the Whole Language cases, I determined that, using Ely's (1990) conditions as a framework, certain conditions emerged specifically for Whole Language implementation. Following is a list of Ely's (1990) conditions and the conditions I found relevant to Whole Language Implementation.

ELY'S CONDITIONS

1. Dissatisfaction
2. Knowledge and Skills Exist
3. Resources Available
4. Time is Available
5. Participation
6. Commitment
7. Leadership
8. Reward and Incentives must exist

NEWTON'S CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF WHOLE LANGUAGE

1. A Need for Whole Language
2. Teacher, Administration, and Parent/Community Preparation
3. Resources
4. Time Pacing
5. Commitment
6. Trust
7. Grass Roots Adoption
8. A Consultant
9. Support Structure
10. Rewards and Incentives

A NEED

A specific need for Whole Language must emerge. In each case the standard program wasn't working. By examining their needs, they determined that Whole Language would satisfy these specified needs. Ely states dissatisfaction as a condition for implementation, but when considering Whole Language implementation, there is not always a complete dissatisfaction with traditional teaching. For example, the Richland school's students were average and above average students that knew how to read and write and performed well on standardized tests. They were not dissatisfied with traditional teaching approaches, but they did want more productivity from the students.

TEACHER, ADMINISTRATION AND PARENT/COMMUNITY PREPARATION

Educating and training teachers, administration and the community is essential for Whole Language implementation. Teachers need the knowledge and skills to perform Whole Language activities, and administrators need to understand what teachers are doing and know what role they must play. The parents must also understand how the children are being taught; after all, gaining the support of parents results from educating them and getting them to participate. Looking at the Richland case in particular, educating parents may be one of the most crucial factors when implementing Whole Language. The community should

also be educated enough to give the program support. This condition is developed from Ely's (1990) condition that Knowledge and Skills must exit in order for change to occur. The difference when dealing with Whole Language implementation is that knowledge and skills do not need to merely exist-- they are called upon throughout the change process, which is stated as ongoing. Thus a consistent ongoing training is referred to as preparation.

RESOURCES

In order for Whole Language to be implemented, it is essential that resource materials such as Big Books, various authentic literature and learning center materials are purchased. The availability of money, not just for materials, but for pilot programs, workshops, training programs, which were mentioned frequently and seen as ongoing, is essential. In each case, resources were required to implement Whole Language activities. For some, money was available, making the purchase of materials easier and for others, sharing, the use of public libraries, and their own personal funds were used for resources.

SUPPORT STRUCTURE

A strong support structure must exist. The Whole Language philosophy "involves a fundamental change in a teacher's belief

system about the culture of the classroom" (Monson, 1991), making its implementation difficult for teachers. Support must come from a variety of areas such as, other teachers, administration, parents, and the community. As Sandra said, "I couldn't have done it with out the support." A key supporter at any degree of implementation is the principal. Each case stated the principal as an important element in the implementation process. If the principal supports the idea, then he/she is one step closer, and if the principal does not it will seriously hinder the process. As the unit of analysis changed from classroom to school to attempted district and district implementation, the members of the support group changed but the need for support remained constant.

TIME PACING

Time pacing is the ability for each teacher to implement Whole Language activities at a pace comfortable for themselves. This concept of time is similar to Ely's condition of time. Ely (1990) defines time "as the time to learn, adapt, integrate, and reflect on what you are doing." Each case referred to the time needed, as explained by Ely, to implement Whole Language, but also to the need for individual time pacing. All of the cases stated a process by which teachers were allowed to choose their own rate of implementation. It is worth considering how much control of time-pacing exists as the degree of implementation

increases from a classroom to a school, and then to a district. Looking at the cases it seems that as the degree of implementation increases, the ability to choose your own rate decreases. A greater degree of implementation, as seen in the Richland case, has a greater number of people involved in the process. If they are all supporting the change then this support is likely to make teachers increase their rate of implementation. As demonstrated in the Sweeney case, a single teacher was creating the implementation process, thus she chose her rate without outside influence.

COMMITMENT

Every individual involved with the implementation process must be committed to the Whole Language philosophy to ensure that implementation occurs. Commitment can be demonstrated verbally, but is more definite if observable. Teachers staying after school or coming in early to work on their plans, attending Whole Language workshops and in-service training even on weekends or in the summer are indicators of committment. In each case teachers were attending workshops, some had in-service training and other activities which demonstrated their commitment. Ely's commitment condition is very similar, in that the commitment he describes is also a commitment to the program or innovation that is to be implemented.

TRUST

Allowing teachers to gain ownership and empowerment of the program instills trust between the administration, consultant and the teacher. A trustworthy relationship must be established in order for the teacher to participate in the implementation to the extent that they take risks, make mistakes, learn from them and ultimately feel comfortable with the situation. Trust also encompasses allowing teachers to take these risks without feeling under constant scrutiny by the administration. Trust is exemplified when examining the accountability/testing component of Whole Language. The administration must trust the staff to prepare students adequately, since there is no standardized testing. In the cases examined, only Richland and Sweeney actually assessed their students without standardized tests, and Richland opted to hire a testing consultant to help them. Accountability is an issue of concern with Whole Language and trust will play a major role in it's proper implementation. There is a fine line between support and trust, but when implementing Whole Language, that line must be established.

Trust, emerges from Ely's committment condition. When implementing Whole Language there is not only a need for commitment to the philosophy, but a need for committment between the people involved. This commitment to one another was best referred to as trust.

A CONSULTANT

Consultation of some form should exist, whether it is through a book, or more preferably, a person that can model and conference with the teachers. The consultant knows Whole Language and is able to help teachers make the difficult transition that exists.

This condition was developed from Ely's leadership condition. Although Whole Language must have a grass roots adoption, the emergence of a leader still exists. In each case, as the adoption progressed into implementation, a person emerged that provided the leadership for the process and in every case became the consultant for the process.

GRASS ROOTS ADOPTION

Teachers, being the actual implementers of Whole Language, must believe in and support the change. Whole Language philosophy is such a drastic change from traditional teaching, that if teachers don't support and adopt the philosophy, it may never be implemented successfully. In each case the teachers were pushing for implementation. They were approaching principals and administrators and asking for Whole Language implementation. Each of the cases analyzed expressed the importance of a grass roots adoption.

REWARDS AND INCENTIVES

The majority of school systems do not offer extrinsic rewards and incentives, so it is essential to remind teachers of the intrinsic rewards and incentives that exist. Each case exemplified the intrinsic rewards that exist when implementing Whole Language. Cindy stated, "I felt I was given a license to teach", and Sandra said, " the children were enjoying reading and writing and so was I."

Ely states rewards and incentives as something that should be set prior to implementation. In Whole Language implementation, rewards and incentives most commonly come during the implementation process. In Kathy's case the district did offer one credit workshops as incentives, but all other rewards and incentives came from the implementation process.

SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF WHOLE LANGUAGE

This summary is based on information collected during interviews of the sources and diffusion and implementation theory.

Before implementation, one must diffuse or spread the Whole Language idea to individuals in a social system. As stated by the sources, this can be accomplished by saturating the system with literature on Whole Language, providing observations of pilot classrooms, professional or in-service lectures, and workshops. As ideas spread, people reach certain levels in the diffusion process-- the first level being awareness, the second interest, and the third adoption. It is essential to understand that this process is not easy and that each individual will move through the levels at their own rate-- some never making it to the adoption stage. Rogers (1983) classifies individuals into certain categories as they move through the diffusion process. An S-shaped curve represents the categories. The first 2.5% are the innovators, the next 13.5% are the early adopters, the next 34% are the early majority, the next 34% are the late majority, and the last 16% are the laggards. A person must know how to interact with each category of adopters if they wish to disseminate information effectively, and ultimately create adoption of the innovation. The specific diffusion process for Whole Language uses the above steps, but concentrates on three groups-- administrators, teachers and parents. It is crucial to

recognize that creating adoption in all of these groups is important, but it is essential to have teachers adopt the program in a grass roots fashion. In fact one could justify that this may be the only way for adoption of Whole Language to occur. Administrators are not likely to want to adopt Whole Language because of the accountability/testing factors, as seen in the Campbell case, and parents may not understand it enough to push for it.

After diffusion has occurred and Whole Language has been adopted, the first condition for implementation is to determine whether there is a need for Whole Language in the system that has considered it. Common sense tells us that a person will not alter their beliefs and their stable structure unless they feel there is a need for change. If this condition exists then we are on the road to successful implementation; just remember that it's not a paved road, so go slow!

Now that a need has been expressed and it has been determined that Whole Language will fulfill that need, we must consider who will be implementing this approach. No matter who decides that Whole Language will be implemented (... the school system, school board, principal and/or the teacher) the individual that essentially will be implementing this approach is the classroom teacher. The diffusion process has allowed the teacher to acquire information about Whole Language and how it works. Although teachers may be knowledgeable about Whole Language, when implementation begins they will need to reexamine

and question the theory many times. Thus ongoing training for teachers as well as administration and parent/community is essential. Before teachers can begin to implement Whole Language activities, they must have resources such as money and materials.

Now that it has been adopted and resources are available, a consultant for the Whole Language program is needed to connect Whole Language theory with the new ideas that teachers will be practicing. This person can be hired from outside the system, such as a university, or in many cases can be found in the principal or reading specialist of the school. In some cases the consultant may even be a book, but this is not the ideal situation.

The teachers at this point are "doing what they think is best, and accepting the need for change entails accepting that what they were doing in the past was somehow not good enough" (Wollman, 1991). Teachers must feel comfortable with the uncertainty that will soon become a normality, and this can be accomplished by establishing trust between the consultant, administration and the teacher before any change occurs.

The role of teachers will change; they are no longer asked to directly teach material to students, but are asked to become a facilitator within a classroom that may seem noisy and uncontrolled. Before implementation starts, teachers must be prepared to make changes. They must understand Whole Language and its purpose and how it will affect them because "you can only facilitate change that individuals are ready to make" (Wollman,

1991). The teachers, along with everyone else involved in the implementation, must be committed to the philosophy.

One condition that can prepare teachers for change involves letting them adopt their own rate of implementation. The consultant supplies literature at request, models Whole Language lessons and offers any support that is requested by the teacher. Many times the change becomes easier if the teacher can slowly incorporate Whole Language ideas into the approach they are presently using. As this process takes place the teachers themselves will practice Whole Language ideas, react to how they work, and if successful will most likely inquire about other ideas. As teachers implement more ideas, their beliefs begin to change. One must understand that allowing the teachers to choose their rate of implementation does not mean that one allows them to become stagnant; this is why the consultant is so important. The consultant gently nudges teachers ahead when needed so that progress is occurring.

As we have seen, it is crucial that the implementation progress at a comfortable rate, allowing the teacher to gain ownership and empowerment of the program. The trustworthiness of the consultant is essential; the teacher needs a consultant who will "know and respect them, provide ongoing support, and link theory to practice" (Wollman, 1991) if change is to occur. The consultant must also allow the teacher to try ideas that are compatible with their current program first, then suggest, upon request or need, ideas that may be less compatible. The teacher

will also need the freedom to try out ideas, and decide on his or her own whether the idea will work for them. Eventually Whole Language activities will work and they will begin to receive some of the intrinsic rewards and incentives that exist. The support given by the administration and parents/community is also important to consider; they can either foster or hinder the implementation process. For example, the Richland case was expedited by the support of parents and the Campbell case was hindered because the principal did not support the idea.

Despite the problems and time constraints incurred by implementing Whole Language, it has been successfully implemented. Satisfying the previous conditions are a guideline to assist in the implementation process. Administrators and anyone involved in the implementation "should realize that Whole Language is a multidimensional belief system, that everyone involved in it's implementation must become a learner, and this process requires risk taking in a supportive environment." (Nistler, 1990). Without this realization, implementation will never successfully occur.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS ON CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. How did you start thinking about Whole Language?
2. How long did it take you to decide that this was something you wanted to implement?
3. Did you ever have reservations? What were they?
4. Why did you change to Whole Language?
5. What steps did you take to implement Whole Language?
6. What changes occurred? How did the change affect you, your classroom and students?
7. What helped you make these changes? Was there any person or procedure in particular that enabled implementation?
8. Were there any constraints? How did you cope with them?
9. Where do you feel you are in the implementation process?
10. Who decided to implement Whole Language?
11. What one thing do you feel is necessary for implementation?
12. Do you feel you have completely implemented Whole Language?
13. What role did your principal play in the implementation process?
14. How will you ensure that Whole Language remains implemented?
15. Did teachers participate during implementation?
16. Were there incentives for the change?